

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1 and 10 have been amended, and claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, and 4-15 are pending and under consideration.

Rejection of Claims 1, 2, and 4-9 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, and 4-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,766,132 issued to Sakai et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Sakai") in view of U.S. Patent 6,871,033 issued to Sato et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Sato"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant amends claim 1 to include features of claim 3. In item 4, the Office Action indicates that claim 3 includes allowable features. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Sakai and Sato, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the features of amended claim 1.

Claims 2 and 4-9 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 2 and 4-9 also patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

Objection to Claims 3 and 10-15

The Office Action objects to claims 3 and 10-15 because they depend upon rejected base claim 1. Applicant cancels claim 3 without prejudice or disclaimer, and withdrawal of the objection to claim 3 is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant rewrites claim 10 in independent form. Because claim 10 no longer depends from a rejected base claim and claims 11-15 depend from claim 10, withdrawal of the objection to claims 10-15 is respectfully requested.

Summary

Claims 1, 2, and 4-15 are pending and under consideration. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references taken separately or in combination disclose the present claimed invention.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Serial No. 10/782,843

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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